



Dear DBE or ACDBE Certified Firm:

This letter is to notify you that the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) recently issued an [Interim Final Rule \(IFR\)](#) requiring immediate changes to the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) and Airport Concessions DBE (ACDBE) programs. These changes are significant and will impact DBE and ACDBE certification, reporting, and compliance processes nationwide.

In sum, the IFR eliminates race- and gender-based presumptions in the DBE and ACDBE programs, including certification. Every certified DBE and ACDBE must be reevaluated by their state Unified Certification Program (UCP) for individualized proof of disadvantage. During the period of reevaluation, agencies cannot count participation toward current DBE or ACDBE goals or set new DBE or ACDBE goals until reevaluations are completed.

Key provisions of the IFR:

- **Certification Review:** All current DBE and ACDBE firms previously certified using race- or sex- based presumptions of social and economic disadvantage must be reevaluated by their jurisdiction of original certification's UCP to determine eligibility under the new standards established by the IFR.
- **Personal Narrative Requirement:** To be reevaluated, all currently certified DBE and ACDBE firms will be required to submit a personal narrative explaining their social and economic disadvantage and attach an updated personal net worth statement.
- **Suspension of DBE and ACDBE Goals:** As of October 3, 2025, recipients of USDOT funding cannot enforce goals on existing contracts or set goals on new contracts until the reevaluation process has been completed by the state UCP.

The Hillsborough County Aviation Authority (HCAA) is one of nine certifying agencies in Florida's Unified Certification Program (Florida UCP). The Florida UCP is a cooperative effort responsible for implementing the federal DBE and ACDBE programs consistently across the State of Florida. Because the IFR introduces new federal requirements, HCAA must coordinate closely with the other Florida UCP certifying members to determine a uniform approach for implementation. This coordination is essential to ensure that all certification and compliance procedures remain aligned statewide.

As this coordination takes place, we ask for your patience while HCAA and the Florida UCP, carefully review the new rule, assess its impacts, and develop updated procedures to comply with the federal requirements. We will provide updates as new information and procedures become available.

Thank you for your continued partnership and understanding as we work through these important federal program changes.